Export and Import Policy (2002-2007) provides that all imported goods shall also be subject to domestic laws, rules, orders, regulations, technical specifications, environmental and safety norms as applicable on domestically produced goods. Accordingly, import of steel products has been made subject to compliance of mandatory Indian Quality Standards as applicable to like domestic goods vide DGFT Notification 44 dated 24.11.2000.

The standards in respect of steel items are applicable on domestic producers under Ministry of Steel and Mines, Department of Iron and Steel, Notifications dated 4.1.1965 and 26.3.1971.

Representations are received from trade and industry from time to time for removal/review of all such restrictions, which are imposed under para 2.2 of Export and Impoart Policy, the restrictions are reviewed periodically and all such representations are taken note of in consultation with concerned administrative Ministries during review as also the Ministry of Law wherever legal issues are raised. In the case of steel products, the Ministry of Law, to whom the representations were referred, has opined that it is also possible to take a view that the notifications dated 4.1.65 and 26.3.71 were not mandatory in character.

Trade Policy review body of WTO

639. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Trade Policy Review Body of WTO conducts review of trade policies of countries on a rgular basis;

(b) if so, whether any review has been conducted for India so far;

(c) if so, the findings thereof; and

(d) the action taken by Indian in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir. The trade polices and practices of all the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Members

are subject to periodic review. This is provided for under Annex 3 of the Marrakesh Agrrement establishing the WTO. The frequency of review is determined on the basis of the share of world trade of the members in a recent representative period. The first four trading entities so identified (presently Canada, European Union, Japan and USA) are subject to review every two years; the next 16 are reviewed every four years. Other Members are reviewed every six years; a longer period may be fixed for least-developed country Members. India's trade policy is reviewed after every four years.

(b) and (c) The third trade policy review of India took place in WTO on 19 and 21 June 2002 while the earlier one took place in 1998, the recent trade policy review attracted a high level of participation and interest by the WTO Members where several Members also sought Clarification on various specific issues. In her concluding remarks, the Chairperson of the WTO Trade Policy Review Body stated that this review meeting had led to a much better understanding of India's trade policies and summed up the proceedings as follows; "The large number of advance questions, numerous interventions and the high level of attendance indicate the important role that India plays at the WTO. India was commended for its reform process, including trade liberalisation, and simplification of the trade and investment regime. However, I think we all agree that India needs to do more if growth targets are to be met and a serious dent is to be made in the still high rate of poverty . In this regard, Members gave India their full support for its efforts to reform the economy. Many Members added that these efforts would be greately enhanced by steps on the part of India's trading partners to reduce, if not remove, their impediments to India's exports, especially in the context of new negotiations in line with the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). India has clearly stated its support for the WTO and the DDA but considers that if further progress is to be made, the onus remains on the developed countries to keep the promises made in Doha. This view was endorsed by many other Membes, who look to India for leadership in these negotiations."

(d) India has replied to the various questions posed by the WTO Members during the trade policy review.